

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2142

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, CY

SUBJ: SOVIET MFA OFFICIAL ON CYPRUS PROBLEM

1. SUMMARY. IN CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 12 WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR MFA CYPRUS EXPERT A.N. BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO STRESSED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR CYPRUS' TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY, AND INDICATED SOVIETS TAKE A NEGATIVE VIEW OF A BIZONAL TYPE FEDERATION AS THE BASIS FOR A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. HE, NONETHELESS, AVOIDED ANY DIRECT CRITICISM OF TURKS FOR SUPPORTING THIS IDEA. IN DISCUSSING THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS, BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-INTERFERENCE BY OUTSIDE POWERS IN THE CYPRUS INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. HE MADE A STANDARD REFERENCE TO THE SOVIETS' AUGUST PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS, BUT DID NOT INDICATE MOSCOW BELIEVES IT LIKELY THAT A MEETING WILL BE CONVENED SHORTLY. HE AVOIDED A DIRECT REPLY TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A MAJOR VISIT TO MOSCOW, AND CONCLUDED THAT IF THE CYPRIOTS ARE LEFT TO SOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM THEMSELVES, THERE IS REASON TO BE SOMEWHAT OPTIMISTIC THAT A SETTLEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED. BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO'S REMARKS GAVE NO INDICATION

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THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PREPARED FOR THE FEBRUARY 13 PROCLAMATION

OF A SEPARATE TURKISH-CYPRIOT AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL COUNSELOR FEBRUARY 12 PAID COURTESY CALL ON A.N. BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO, COUNSELOR OF MFA FIFTH EUROPEAN DIVISION (THE BALKANS), TO DISCUSS CYPRUS. FOR THE MOST PART BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO, WHO ACCOMPANIED ILICHEV TO CYPRUS LAST FALL AND HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED TO US AS THE MFA'S MOST EXPERIENCED CYPRUS EXPERT, PROVIDED AN AUTHORITATIVE REITERATION OF WHAT THE SOVIET PRESS HAS BEEN SAYING ABOUT CYPRUS OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS. THERE WERE, HOWEVER, SEVERAL POINTS OF INTEREST.

3. CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. WHEN ASKED IF THE SOVIETS HAD ANY VIEWS ON THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL FOR A CANTONAL SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM (REPORTED IN SOVIET PRESS FEBRUARY 12), BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO SAID THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DOES NOT TAKE ANY OFFICIAL POSITION ON THIS "CYPRIOT INTERNAL MATTER." HE STATED THAT HE, IN ANY CASE, HAD NOT YET SEEN ANYTHING OTHER THAN PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE PROPOSAL AND DID NOT KNOW ITS SPECIFIC DETAILS. HIS MAIN THEME WAS THAT THE SOVIETS SUPPORT THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF CYPRUS AND OPPOSE OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN CYPRIOT AFFAIRS. IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID THE SOVIET-U.S. STATEMENT ON CYPRUS AT VLADIVOSTOK HAD GIVEN IMPORTANT SUPPORT TO CYPRIOT SOVEREIGNTY AND HAD ADDED FURTHER WEIGHT TO THE UN RESOLUTIONS ON CYPRUS.

4. ON THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT CANTONAL IDEA, MOSCOW, HE SAID, HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT SOME KIND OF FEDERATIVE ARRANGEMENT IS NOW TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY MOST CYPRIOTS. QUESTION NOW REVOLVES AROUND WHETHER THIS FEDERATION WILL BE BASED ON SOME KIND OF CANTONAL ARRANGEMENT LIKE THAT REPORTEDLY PUT FORTH BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CYPRUS OR ON A BIZONAL-TYPE STRUCTURE WHICH IS FAVORED BY THE TURKS. AGAIN STRESSING THAT THE CRUCIAL QUESTION IS PRESERVATION OF CYPRUS' INDEPENDENCE, HE SAID THERE APPEARED TO BE SOME DANGER IN THE TURKISH IDEA BECAUSE IT WOULD REQUIRE "A MASSIVE MOVEMENT OF POPULATIONS." THIS, HE THOUGHT, MIGHT CREATE A PERMANENTLY UNSTABLE SITUATION ON THE ISLAND AND THEREBY INSTITUTIONALIZE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.

5. SETTLEMENT PROCESS. BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS BY CONFIDENTIAL

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OUTSIDE POWERS. THE SOVIETS, HE SAID, AS IS PUBLICLY KNOWN, SUPPORT THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS BETWEEN CLERIDES AND DENKTASH. IN THIS CONNECTION THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE TALKS BE UNHINDERED BY PRESSURES FROM OUTSIDE. THE UN RESOLUTIONS ON CYPRUS, HE STRESSED, PROVIDE A GOOD BASIS FOR SETTLING THE PROBLEM AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY BE IMPLEMENTED.

6. AS TO THE SOVIETS' AUGUST PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL

CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS, BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO NOTED THE IDEA HAD RECEIVED CYPRIOT AND GREEK ENDORSEMENT AND, SOMEWHAT UNCONVINCINGLY, ASSERTED THAT IT ALSO ENJOYED "WIDE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT." HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT THE SOVIETS WERE EITHER OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE CHANCES THAT A CONFERENCE WILL TAKE PLACE OR THAT THEY WERE ACTIVELY PURSUING EFFORTS TO GET ONE CONVENED.

7. POSSIBLE MAKARIOS' VISIT TO MOSCOW. WHEN ASKED RE MAKARIOS' PUBLIC HINTS THAT HE MIGHT CONSIDER A VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION (NICOSIA 0474) BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO SAID MAKARIOS WAS KNOWN TO FAVOR CONTACTS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE SOCIALIST STATES. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE KNEW OF NO CURRENT PLANS FOR A MAKARIOS VISIT TO THE USSR.

8. GENERAL OUTLOOK. BOTSAN-KHARCHENKO EXPRESSED GENERAL VIEW THAT THE CYPRIOT SITUATION HAD IMPROVED SOMEWHAT SINCE JULY. THE RETURN OF MAKARIOS AND THE FORMATION OF A NEW CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT WERE CHARACTERIZED AS POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS. NEVERTHELESS, HE INSISTED, THE KEY PROBLEMS REMAINED. THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS, HE SAID, HAVE NOT MADE MUCH PROGRESS. THERE HAD BEEN SOME SUCCESS ON "HUMANITARIAN ISSUES" BUT ON BASIC PROBLEMS, EVEN WHEN THEY CONCERNED LIMITED ISSUES (E.G., NICOSIA AIRPORT OR THE PORT OF FAMAGUSTA) THERE HAD BEEN NO REAL SUCCESS. IN THIS CONTEXT HE AGAIN REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-INTERFERENCE BY OUTSIDE FORCES IN THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS AND CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING MILD OPTIMISM THAT A CYPRIOT SETTLEMENT COULD BE WORKED OUT.

9. COMMENT: HIS REMARKS SUGGESTED THAT MOSCOW HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE TURKISH-CYPRIOT PROCLAMATION OF A SEPARATE TURKISH-CYPRIOT REPUBLIC. HOWEVER, BOTH THE TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF HIS OBSERVATIONS INDICATE THAT THIS WILL CLEARLY
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BE VIEWED IN MOSCOW AS AN UNWELCOME AND COMPLICATING DEVELOPMENT.
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